

## **U.S. -MACEDONIA JUDGE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**



As part of the U.S.-Macedonia Judge Mentorship Program, three U.S. judges observed implementation of the new Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) in Macedonian courts, and advised Macedonian judges on how to cope with major challenges. U.S. federal judge Richard Stearns and U.S. state judges Hollis Hill and Lawrence Brown were upbeat, although they also noted challenges: “Today I saw an accurate acknowledgment of the defendant’s rights

within a guilty plea, and overall, if I were a law professor I would have given “A plus” for this case. However, I counsel patience as we needed about 20 years in the U.S. to fully implement similar reforms,” Judge Stearns told media.

The U.S. judges and their peers also exchanged views on CPC implementation challenges at a roundtable in Beroovo. The U.S.-Macedonia Judge Mentorship Program is sponsored by the INL Justice Section at U.S. Embassy Skopje and aims to improve judicial independence and the capacity of Macedonian judges to assume their new role under the adversarial CPC.